

A Christmas Babe.

Continued from page 2.

"Humph! The watch is a sav-
age if he can't tell a goodly
woman of New Amsterdam from
one of those up-river Indians.
Unless he follows better fash-
ions I will report him to Herr
Stuyvesant. He will beat him
with his wooden leg."

"Oh—oh, father!"

"Yust, my child, I was only
jesting, and to show that thy
father will care for thee."

"I thank thee." After this
pleasant and domestic episode
there was silence. Hans sat be-
fore the broad open fireplace
with its frolicking flames and
smoking his long-stemmed pipe,
while Katryne made her spin-
ning wheel fly merrily round.
In one of the pauses of her
wheel she said:

"I heard a voice, father."

"It is nothing. The wind,
my child, blowing straight from
East river and Helle Gat." Bur-
r-r-r went the wheel, and
then came another pause.

"I do hear something, father."

"The snow sliding down the
roof, my child."

"It is something at the door."

"Let me go, Katryne. The
watch is up to a trick, I dare
say." He went to the door,
opened it, and there upon the
stoop what did he spy?

"A roll of beaver skin!" ex-
claimed the fat Hans, stooping
and grunting. "Ugh! a Christ-
mas gift of beaver for Hans
Van Schenkel." What luck!
He hustled back to the fire-
place, opened the beaver skin,
and here to his amazement was
a sweet-faced child! It opened
its eyes, cried once, stared at
Hans, and then, as if it had
found a protector, shut its eyes
again.

"Oh—oh—father! A poor lit-
tle babe! Let me have it! I will
take it to my bed."

"A foundling, Katryne! Who
cumbers my stoop with a found-
ling? The watch shall take it
to Herr Stuyvesant this very
night."

"Father, stay thee! Look!"
and she pointed at the picture
on the wall. "It's like the
Christ-child. Wouldst thou turn
him away this eve of the bless-
ed festival of the Nativity? No,
no; keep him till I get back,
anyway, I pray thee." Katryne
was very nimble. Hans was
very slow. Ere he was fully
aware of it she was under her
crimson hood and it was slip-
ping out of the door.

"I keep it only until thy re-
turn!" he called, but a stout
door of oak was already be-
tween her and Hans. He was
in a dilemma. The child cried
when it was moved to a bed.
At first Hans fumed. Then he
gradually became quiet. At
last he did what Dutchmen have
been charged with a fondness
in doing—he went to sleep, the
beaver cradle still in his arms.
He had not ventured to drop it,
for what if the baby cried again
and the neighbors heard it?
The baby had found a protec-
tor, knew it would not be se-
parated and had gone to sleep.
Hans followed. In his sleep he
heard a voice.

"Hans, thou hast the Holy
Babe in thy arms, the Christ-
child, who comes this night to
every soul. Wilt thou turn
him away? He opened his eyes,
and there was Katryne. All
over the crimson were white
doves from the sea.

"Thou wilt keep him, fath-
er? He could but not his
heart. She went away, quickly

ed her who knelt beside Katryne
at his side and said:

"Father!"

"My child!"

"Thou wilt forgive me?"

"And thou wilt forgive thy
father?"

That was all. No, not all.
Hans reached out his hands and
rested one on the head of Kat-
ryne and one on the head of
Lysbet. The babe stirred now
in its furry cradle, only to look
up and smile. And somehow it
seemed as if the picture on the
wall had got out into the room,
and the love and peace in that
group of the Holy Family came
down like wings, and the air of
June had made summer and
song that Christmas eve under
the roof of Hans Van Schenkel.
—Edward A. Rand, in N. Y.
Observer.

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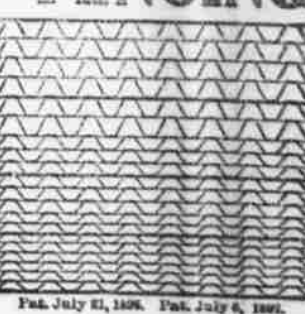
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WHAT A MEAN MAN SAYS.

A fool is very seldom an old
bachelor, and an old bachelor
is very seldom a fool.

Half the time when a man
kisses a girl he does it just to
keep her from thinking.

The only thing a man won't
forgive in a woman he loved is
being able to live without him.

Probably the original idea in
giving Love wings was so a
man could use them after he
got married.

two reasons—either for what
they see in them or for what
they see of them. The accent
you put on it makes the differ-
ence.

A woman will eat a whole
plateful of Spanish onions on
them for supper and then cry
most of the night because she
is afraid her husband doesn't
love her as much as he did at
first.—Ex.

We speak of a merry Christmas,
And many a Happy New Year;
But each in his heart is thinking
Of those that are not here.